

John Coffee to Andrew Jackson, January 21, 1816, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL JOHN COFFEE TO JACKSON.

Fort Strother, January 21, 1816.

Dear General, I last wrote you from Nashville when I mentioned, being called on as a Commissioner for the extension of the lines, agreeably to the Treaty of Fort Jackson. Through the medium by which my commission was forwarded, I was advised that I would be joined by one of the other Commissions in the whole of the last month, on that part of the line bordering on the Cherokees. I immediately and by the same express advised the Comrs, that I would lose no time in repairing thither, and would certainly meet them as near the day as practicable, as proposed by them, On my arrival here a week ago, and since that time have not heard from them, but immediately on my reaching this post, I started an express to them, advising of my arrival, and a determination to proceed to business.¹ I am aware of the importance and necessity of finishing this business, and as such, have determined to act, alone, if I am not joined by the other Comrs. delay with me at this late day is inadmissable, as yet I have been engaged in collecting the necessary information to enable me to run the line, (as I have no instruction from the information recd. by the other Commrs, during the last eight months.) this day I am to receive a visit from Spoke Hajah, the Mad Wolf, Fife,² and some others, which will enable me to decide on the ground over which the line ought to be run. Tomorrow morning I set out to run an experimental line, that will enable the true line to be run, and marked, by which time I expect a return of the express to the other Commrs. and should they decline joining and acting with me immediately, I shall proceed to run and mark the line. Although I do not

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believe the Original intention, was, for one Comr, to act alone; yet I think it so important that the business be brought to a Close, that the act will be recognised.

1 Feb. 20, 1816, Brigadier-General Gaines wrote to Jackson that he and Colonel Barnett, the other commissioners, arrived at Fort Mitchell on the 17th. They found that the Indians were not disposed to oppose force to the commissioners. At this time Coffee was running the line on the Cherokee side.

2 Jim Fife was an Upper Creek chief. He supported Jackson with 200 of his warriors at the battle of Emuckfau, Jan. 22, 1814, and rendered efficient aid to Coffee, who was hard pressed.

Suppose the line will run from the mouth of Canoe Ck. to the upper end of the Chickasaw Island, near George Fields, so as will leave out the cherokee settlements on Thompsons Ck. I incline to believe the lower line will leave the River Ten. below the shoals perhaps at the mouth of Caney spring creek, and run southwardly to the T. Bigby³ and with it down.

3 Tombigbee.